

WASHINGTON, DC. Congressman Sanford Bishop released the following statement in response to President Bush's State of the Union Address.

"Listening to President Bush's speech, I actually found myself in agreement on at least one issue: we must stop talking about bipartisanship and start putting it into practice. As the President said, we must do this to build a better world for our children and our grandchildren.

"As a nation we are facing some of the most critical challenges of our history: challenges to our military, to our security and to our very way of life. We must come together to support the growing democracy in Iraq, to ensure that our fighting men and women have the resources and equipment they need to complete their mission and get them home safely as soon as possible. We must be diligent in our national security effort to protect the lives of all Americans. And we must expand opportunity, with an economy that puts the American dream within every citizen's reach and a vibrant public education system, which truly leaves no child behind.

"While I am committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I will always stand up for the interests of my constituents. While I believe that we must take steps to ensure the long-term survival of Social Security, I will not vote in favor of any measure that would jeopardize the guaranteed benefit that so many hard working Americans have earned. And while I agree that we must take steps to reduce the federal budget deficit, I believe that we must do so in a way that reflects our values as a nation.

"I remain hopeful that we can put partisan rhetoric aside and focus on the challenges facing us as a nation. I look forward to seeing the President's budget proposal and I stand ready to work with him and my Congressional colleagues on a very ambitious agenda."